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***Incentivising the Profession:
A national mapping of incentives to
attract and retain staff in Australian
non-metropolitan communities.***

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The Centre for Sustainable Communities (CSC) contributes to healthy and sustainable social, cultural, ecological and economic futures by providing research and professional development services to communities, government and the private sector.

Our strengths, developed over more than fifteen years, are those of collaborative and participatory research in regional and community development in both Australian and international contexts. Working in partnership with communities and related regional and community agencies, we aim to:

- Build sustainable environmental, social, cultural and economic capacity through partnership in research and development
- Work with communities in the recognition of their own strengths, assets and capacities using processes which respect action learning and collaboration
- Develop strategies for change in response to evolving environmental, social, cultural and economic contexts
- Build leadership and professional networks that support sustainable and cooperative endeavours in communities.

The Centre's research highlights learning and development beyond formal education, in community and organisational settings and contexts where informal learning is significant. We are interested in how this perspective can contribute to the adaptation of formal institutions to the contemporary challenges of social and cultural change.

The Rural Education and Communities (REC) research group, within the CSC, leads research focused on empowering rural schools and their communities. With a focus upon the sustainability of rural communities, the Rural Education and Communities research group aims to make a lasting contribution to both theoretical and practical developments in rural education research. Situated within rural sociology, the sociology of knowledge, educational sociology and social justice, the Rural Education and Communities research group is informed by the spatial turn in social theory and sustainability. The Rural Education and Communities research group focuses upon the following core themes:

- Rurality
- Space, Place & Spatial Justice (Social Justice)
- Rural Regional Sustainability
- Rural Standpoint

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Executive summary

The staffing of rural, remote, and isolated schools has been a significant concern in Australia since the inception of compulsory schooling. To overcome this perennial challenge, education jurisdictions across the country turn to incentives as the main approach to encourage teachers to take up a position in a non-metropolitan school. Overall, the use of financial incentives far outweighs any other type of incentives.

There are limited examples of incentives focussed on the professional conditions in which teachers work. Instead the dominance of financial incentives positions financial inducements, compensation and relocation as the main drivers of behaviour. Motivation to work in non-metropolitan communities is situated in narrow human capital terms, informed by external motivators. There is limited focus on internal human capitals related to professional motivations. Furthermore, there are no

compulsory units in pre-service teacher education to support the preparation for teaching in these communities. Incentivising the profession solely through external motivations ignores the character of professional practice: the desire to be able to perform the role one trained and prepared for. The existing approach fails to acknowledge the distinct nature of non-metropolitan practice, and the preparation needed for these locations. Instead, financial incentives that dominate current policy run the risk of exacerbating the staffing problem. While they attract teachers, without preparation for the specificities of non-metropolitan practice, and recognition of this practice, teachers remain highly vulnerable to leaving after their mandated duration of service is complete. To achieve long-term change in hard to staff non-metropolitan schools we need to re-balance the scales and ensure a better balance between compensatory incentives and those that reward professional practice.

Key findings

1. Literature: Incentives may attract staff to non-metropolitan areas, however, they do not always retain teachers.
2. Policy: Incentives focus on compensating staff over increasing professional skills.
3. Pre-service Teachers: Removing costs associated with non-metropolitan teaching is the dominant approach to incentives.
4. Teacher Education Courses: Few teacher education courses involve preparation for non-metropolitan areas.
5. In-service Teachers: Perceived disadvantage of non-metropolitan locations is reinforced by compensating teachers.
6. Calculating Incentives: The higher the perceived disadvantage the more incentives on offer.

“To achieve long-term change in hard to staff non-metropolitan schools we need to value the distinct nature of the profession in these areas, rather than incentivise the profession with financial compensation that further reinforces the perceived disadvantage of these areas.”



Introduction

The staffing of rural, remote, and isolated schools remains a significant issue of concern in Australian education. Over the last twenty plus years much research has been undertaken into opportunities and challenges of rural schools. This work has focussed upon pre-service teacher preparation, school staffing and leadership. Within these focus areas there are numerous suggestions about the policy setting, incentives, understanding place, mentoring, professional development, and teacher education. However, as we have raised elsewhere¹, if we have such a well-developed knowledge of matters related to rural school staffing, why does it remain an ongoing issue?

In this paper we focus on the incentives used by jurisdictions to attract and retain teachers in non-metropolitan hard to staff schools. We use a definition of incentives as being any additional benefit offered to teachers or pre-service teachers located outside the metropolitan centres that are used to encourage teachers to work in these areas. We also explore the issue of the preparation of pre-service teachers for non-metropolitan locations as this has been suggested to increase student interest in, and preparedness for, rural teaching positions

In this paper we use the definition 'non-metropolitan' to encompass any location outside the main metropolitan centres in Australia. In terms of schools, this includes those classified as Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote, Very Remote by ACARA on the My Schools categorisation. This categorisation draws on the Australian Bureau of Statistics Remoteness Classifications that is based on distance, population density and access to services². These are on a scale of decreasing density and increasing distance to and availability of services, from major cities through to very remote locations. Major cities are considered to have a higher density population, more service availability, and less distance to major services

and facilities, and very remote locations have low density of population, services and are larger distances to other locations³.

This research has identified that the main approaches to incentives are financial supports, professional development and professional conditions. Importantly, the use of financial incentives by far outweighs any other type of incentives. Incentives that are overwhelmingly focused on financial inducements and compensation are informed by forms of economic and employment rewards. These see motivation in traditional external, economically informed, human capital means. There is very limited focus on internal professional motivations or skills based human capitals. This is further reinforced by the fact that there are no compulsory units in pre-service teacher education to aid preparation for teaching these communities.

Incentivising the profession in this way fails to acknowledge the distinct nature of non-metropolitan practice and the preparation needed for these locations. Instead, financial incentives that dominant policy run the risk of further contributing to the staffing problem. While they attract teachers, without preparation for the specificities of non-metropolitan practice, teachers are encouraged to leaving after their mandated duration of service is complete. A better balance is needed.

To achieve long-term change in hard to staff non-metropolitan schools we need to value the distinct nature of the profession in these areas, rather than incentivise the profession with financial compensation that further reinforces the perceived disadvantage of these areas.

¹ Roberts & Downes, 2018

² ABS, 2011

³ ABS, 2011

Methodology

This research draws on two main data sets: an analysis of incentives used in all jurisdictions that serve a non-metropolitan population, and an analysis of pre-service teacher education courses in Australia.

To identify the incentives on offer in 2019 all education jurisdictions that have non-metropolitan locations were searched for available incentives for pre-service & in-service teachers in Australia. Each jurisdiction's education department website was searched for information about incentives and promotion of the rural teaching profession. Key contacts in each jurisdiction were also contacted by email to confirm the correct web resource was used to gain this information, as well as asking if any further information was available. This search did not include incentives offered by universities or not-for-profit organisations, rather it focused on the incentives offered by public education employers. These incentives were analysed and categorised according to the principles informing them.

We also consider the preparation of pre-service teachers for non-metropolitan locations. The inclusion of a rural focus in pre-service teacher preparation has been argued to increase student interest in non-metropolitan teaching positions. To identify if pre-service teacher education courses had a rural focus, a review of all teacher education courses across all accredited institutions was undertaken. Here pre-service courses were searched for units that include reference to the range of synonyms for "non-metropolitan" locations in their focus or available content description. This included mandatory and elective units. The AITSL website was used to gain a list of all higher education institutions that offer accredited teacher education programs, with 46 institutions included in the analysis.

The analysis included all Bachelor of education qualifications (early childhood, primary, early childhood and primary, secondary, K-12, secondary and arts etc) as well as any post graduate teacher education qualifications such as the Master of Teaching (Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary etc.). All variations of courses were searched (e.g. Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Secondary Teaching, as well as Bachelor of Education Secondary Mathematics at each institution). It is noted that a few institutions did not have their course outlines available, so the title of the unit was used.

This analysis follows similar analysis undertaken in 1984⁴, 1998⁵, 2004⁶, 2008⁷ and 2010⁸ where the content of pre-service teacher education was investigated for the inclusion of non-metropolitan contexts. Since then the regulatory content initial teacher education has changed making revisiting this issue timely, especially in the context of this report.

⁴ Rawlinson, 1984

⁵ Watson, 1998

⁶ Boylan, 2004

⁷ White, 2008

⁸ Boylan, 2010

Literature: Incentives may attract staff to non-metropolitan areas, however, they do not always retain teachers

“Incentivising the profession fails to acknowledge the distinct nature of non-metropolitan practice and preparation needed for these locations.”

The Role of Incentives in Attracting and Retaining Teachers to Rural and Remote Hard to Staff Schools

The 2018 Independent Review into Rural, Regional and Remote Education identified incentives as a strategy government authorities can implement to reduce the challenges of staffing non-metropolitan schools⁹. In this context incentives refer to any additional benefit offered to pre-service teachers, or teachers located outside of the metropolitan centres, that are used to encourage teachers to work in these areas.

While incentives may attract teachers to non-metropolitan locations, they are not always effective in retaining teachers¹⁰. Incentives may influence teacher's decision making about applying for rural positions¹¹ and support them to transition to these locations¹². However, teachers are more likely to stay because of the lifestyle¹³ and when they have had appropriate teacher education training to prepare them for working in non-metropolitan locations¹⁴. As a result, it has been recommended that incentive schemes be expanded¹⁵ and that teacher education focuses explicitly on preparing teachers for non-metropolitan practice¹⁶.

To enhance their effectiveness incentive schemes need to be developed to target the specific needs of different teachers. This includes high performing teachers¹⁷, school leaders, experienced teachers, and specific subject area teachers¹⁸ experience teacher shortages.

A major limitation of current approaches is that incentives are based on extrinsic motivators and focus on disadvantage, rather than valuing the rural teaching profession¹⁹. As such, advertising incentives may in fact harm rural schools and communities rather than benefit them. Incentives can be considered as reinforcing a lack of value of students and communities by teachers, and society more broadly. They can also reinforce a lack of commitment to staying long term²⁰. That is not to say such incentives do not have a role given the values of

modern society and the preference of many teachers for city positions. More we need to be aware of unintended consequences.

Incentives also shift the focus away from universities and their role in supporting and preparing the workforce for non-metropolitan locations²¹. Pre-service teacher education needs to provide a focus on preparing teachers for rural teaching positions²². This includes fostering an understanding of place and belonging²³, professional experience placements²⁴. Supporting students from non-metropolitan locations to return when they graduate is also important²⁵.

Despite these issues, incentives still form a key component of strategies to attract and retain teachers in rural areas. The challenge here is one of balance of types of incentives.

⁹ Halsey, 2018

¹⁰ Handel et al., 2013; Lyons, 2009; White, 2019

¹¹ Handel et al., 2013; Lyons, 2009; OECD, 2019

¹² Halsey, 2018

¹³ Lyons, 2009

¹⁴ Kelly, 2015; McConaghy, 2008; White, 2019; White, et al., 2008

¹⁵ Lock et al., 2012; Lyons, et al., 2006

¹⁶ Reid, 2010; White & Kline, 2012

¹⁷ OECD, 2019

¹⁸ Lyons, et al., 2006

¹⁹ White, 2019

²⁰ Reid, 2010; White, 2019

²¹ White & Reid, 2008; White et al., 2008

²² Halsey, 2012; OECD, 2019

²³ McConaghy, 2008

²⁴ OECD, 2019

²⁵ Cuervo & Acquiro, 2018

Policy: Incentives focus on compensating staff rather than increasing professional skills

“Incentives to work in non-metropolitan communities are situated in narrow human capital terms, informed by external motivators. There is limited focus on internal human capitals related professional motivations.”

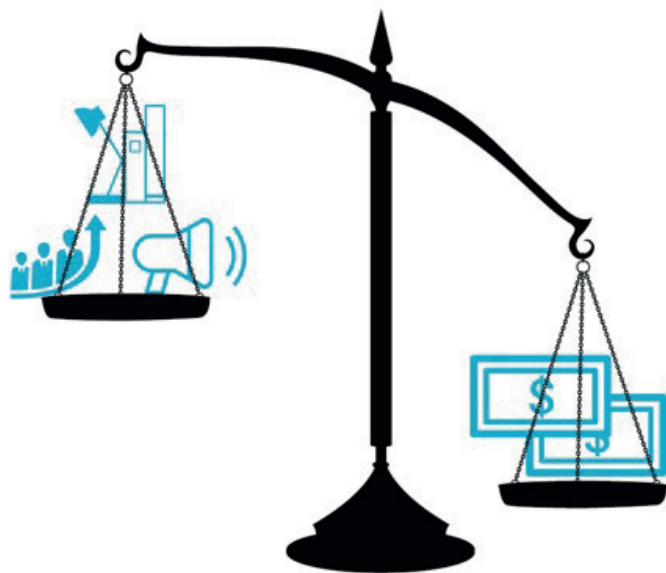
State and Territory Incentives: Pre-service and In-service Teachers

Each state and territory is responsible for the staffing and resourcing of their public schools. For this reason, each state and territory policy regarding incentives for the staffing of non-metropolitan schools is considered separately.

In most states and territories incentives start at a pre-service teacher level, to encourage students to become familiar with non-metropolitan teaching or consider teaching in a non-metropolitan location for a mandated

duration. South Australia, however, was the only state or territory that did not offer incentives for pre-service teachers who may consider teaching in a non-metropolitan hard to staff school.

All Education jurisdictions had incentives available that fall into the categories of: financial payments, professional conditions, professional development and promotion of the profession.



By far the most dominant approach to incentives at both a pre-service and in-service level was financial incentives. While this may assist with attracting teachers to the profession, incentivising the profession with financial compensation fails to acknowledge the distinct nature of non-metropolitan practice and preparation needed for

these locations. Instead, it adds to the perceived notion of disadvantage in these non-metropolitan locations.

It is recommended that incentives also focus on increasing the professional knowledge of teachers about the unique nature of teaching in their community and reward this with career progression and other professional rewards.

Categories of Incentives for Pre-Service Teachers

The following provides an overview of the categories of incentives available to pre-service teachers.



Financial Payments

Financial compensation to encourage students to undertake a placement or take up a position in a non-metropolitan location and to stay long-term. Examples include compensation for costs incurred undertaking placements.



Professional Conditions

Extra opportunities not available to metropolitan teachers in your work conditions. For example, extra leave and faster promotion opportunities.



Professional Development

Extra opportunities to increase knowledge about the teaching profession. For example, more days to attend professional development and more opportunities to participate in further study such as university courses.



Promotion of the Profession

Publicly available resources that promote non-metropolitan teaching as a desirable option, and resources to prepare potential teachers.

Details of Incentives for Pre-Service Teachers



Scholarships: For school leavers to enter teacher training courses. These are usually tied to a mandated duration of service in a non-metropolitan school location after graduation.

Professional Experience Costs: Funding for pre-service teachers to undertake professional experience in non-metropolitan locations.

Scholarships: For school leavers to enter teacher training courses. These are usually tied to a mandated duration of service in a non-metropolitan school location after graduation.

Professional Experience Costs: Funding for pre-service teachers to undertake professional experience in non-metropolitan locations.



Mentoring: Opportunities to work with in-service teachers to gain insight into the profession. This usually forms part of a scholarship.

Pathways to Teaching: Employment based pathways into the profession where students can study and work concurrently or be fast-tracked to employment. Examples of these programs include Programs such as Teach for Australia and the Nexus Program.



Webpage Promotions: The benefits and opportunities of rural teaching are promoted on the jurisdiction website along with incentives and information to prepare teachers.

Careers Fairs: The benefits and opportunities of rural teaching are promoted at travelling careers fairs for students and prospective teachers.



Categories of Incentives for In-Service Teachers

The following provides an overview of the categories of incentives available to in-service teachers.



Financial Payments

This includes financial compensation for the perceived disadvantages of the location. For example, isolation from goods and services and travel costs. The aim of these incentives is to encourage you to stay for longer periods of time.



Professional Conditions

This includes extra opportunities not available to metropolitan teachers in your work conditions. For example, extra leave and faster promotion opportunities.



Professional Development

This includes extra opportunities to increase knowledge about the teaching profession. For example, more days to attend professional development and more opportunities to participate in further study such as university courses.



Promotion of the Profession

This involves having publicly available resources that promote non-metropolitan teaching as a desirable option, and resources to prepare potential teachers.

Details of Incentives for In-Service Teachers



Isolation Payments: Paid to compensate for the isolation.

Retention benefits: Paid for minimum years of service, or for a specific period of service.

Housing: Specific housing available in school community or housing subsidy.

Travel costs: Reimbursement of costs incurred travelling to a main centre from the rural location for medical treatment, or vacations.

Relocation support: The cost of moving belongings.

Experienced Teachers: For teachers certified as highly accomplished.

Other: Educational expenses for dependents, other costs for dependents.

Permanency: After a period of service in a 'hard to staff' school, permanency is granted to the teacher.

Transfer Priority: After a period of rural service, teachers are given the opportunity to move back to a metropolitan location.

Additional Leave: Addition recreation leave days or travel days in recognition of the additional travel times required for services.



Study Leave: Paid leave for further study opportunities

Induction Programs: Access to induction specific for non-metropolitan locations

Professional Development: Access to professional development that is not available to metropolitan teachers

Additional Leave: Paid travel days to attend professional development.

Webpage Promotions: The benefits and opportunities of rural teaching are promoted on the jurisdiction website along with incentives and information to prepare teachers.

Careers Fairs: The benefits and opportunities of rural teaching are promoted at travelling careers fairs for students and prospective teachers.



Pre-service teachers: Reducing costs associated with non-metropolitan teaching is the most dominant approach to incentives.

“Financial incentives that dominate policy run the risk of further contributing to the staffing problem. While they attract teachers, without preparation for the specificities of non-metropolitan practice, teachers are vulnerable to leaving after their mandated duration of service is complete.”

Availability of Incentives for Pre-service Teachers by State and Territory

The following provides an overview of the categories of incentives available to in-service teachers.

Financial



Available in:

- Western Australia
- Queensland
- New South Wales
- Victoria
- Tasmania

Professional Conditions



Available in:

- Queensland
- New South Wales
- Victoria
- Tasmania

Professional Development



Available in:

- Victoria
- Tasmania

Promotion of the Profession



Available in:

- Western Australia
- Queensland
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory
- Tasmania

South Australia was the only education jurisdiction that did not provide any incentives to pre-service teachers interested in non-metropolitan hard to staff schools.

Availability of Incentives for Pre-service Teachers by State and Territory

Financial incentives were the most common approach to support for students. This included financial support to undertake non-metropolitan placements during their degree, and scholarships that encourage students to commence their teaching service in non-metropolitan locations on completion of their degree for a mandated period of time.

Although financial support for students is crucial to enable teachers to take up opportunities in non-metropolitan locations, this needs to be balanced with appropriate professional development during their initial teacher education to prepare teachers for the specificities of non-metropolitan practice. Financial incentives that dominant policy run the risk of further contributing to the staffing problem. While they attract teachers, without preparation for the specificities of non-metropolitan practice, teachers are vulnerable to leaving after their mandated duration of service is complete.

The following section provides details of incentives offered by category and by state and territory.

Promotion of the Profession



Webpage Promotion

Information on becoming a teacher in a non-metropolitan location



Careers Fairs

Promotion of teaching opportunities in non-metropolitan locations at events such as university careers fairs or travelling pop-up stalls that stop at different events.



No Incentives Available



Financial Incentives



Scholarships for HSC Students

\$7,500 per year of study
\$500 per week placement allowance
\$6,000 appointment allowance
Up to \$50,000 course fees

Scholarships for STEM

\$15,000 Graduate Teacher Scholarship

Scholarships for Professional Experience

Beyond the Range: Placements in non-metropolitan schools
(priority areas, or 90 mins travel from a student's home
address or the university)



Scholarships for VET Professionals

Paid study time and costs for VET professional to
retrain as teachers

Funding for Placements

Final year students receive travel and living
allowances and support to find accommodation



Scholarship for Internships

Up to \$15,000 funding to work as an intern in
their final year of study. This covers travel and
accommodation.

*This incentive is also available outside non-
metropolitan areas.*



No Incentives Available



Professional Development



Pathways Programs

Alternate entry into teaching through programs that change the qualification structure and length



Employment Pathways

High performing graduates can work as a para-professional in schools while studying

Internship Opportunities

Final year students can undertake paid teaching work for 35 hours per week. Part of the scholarships for pre-service teachers



No Incentives Available



Professional Conditions



Scholarships include Permanency



Scholarships include Mentoring



No Incentives Available



“There are limited examples of incentives focussed on the professional conditions in which teachers work. Instead the dominance of financial incentives positions financial inducements, compensation and relocation as the main drivers of behaviour. There is limited focus on internal human capitals related to professional motivations.”

Teacher Education Courses: Few initial teacher education courses involve preparation for non-metropolitan practice

“Without appropriate preparation for teachers for service in non-metropolitan schools the staffing problems that many non-metropolitan schools face every year will continue to affect the educational outcomes and aspirations of students in these schools.”

Pre-service Teacher Education Courses 2019-2020

Almost a third of Australian students live in non-metropolitan locations. Preparing teachers for practice in non-metropolitan schools so that they are aware of the opportunities, challenges and differences in these settings is considered one key way to attract teachers to rural area²⁶. However, in the past, few universities have been found to have this focus²⁷. Those institutions that have are typically located in regional area²⁸. Without appropriate preparation for non-metropolitan schools the staffing problems that many non-metropolitan schools face every year will continue to affect the educational outcomes and aspirations of students in these schools.

Findings at a glance: Pre-service teacher education courses



No teacher education course in Australia has a compulsory unit dedicated solely to non-metropolitan practice

Two institutions have **compulsory units** that mention rural as part of overall course description, that are not linked to placements. For example, 'contexts of education', 'diversity in education' or 'problems in education'.

2

2

Two institutions have **elective units** that considers rural content, not linked to placements. For example, teaching in rural and remote locations, understanding the rural professional context.

Two institutions have **compulsory** placement units where it is either indicated that placements in non-metropolitan settings are available, or should be taken if possible (but they are not compulsory).

2

3

Three institutions have **optional** placement units focused specifically on rural and remote locations.

Three institutions had a unit that mentions "rural" in their available **electives**. These units were mainly for preparing students to work in rural settings.

3



All institutions offered units that focused on either context, equity groups, social justice, disadvantage, differentiating learning. These **may** include rural but they have **no specific reference to rural practice**.

The inclusion of context/equity/social justice units also **varied between courses** at each university. For example, some of the undergraduate course outlines may not have had one, while the postgraduate courses did; and while a secondary education course may have a unit an early childhood one may not and vis versa.



²⁶ Green, 2008; Green & Novak, 2008; White & Kline, 2012; White & Reid, 2008

²⁷ Green, 2008; Trinidad et al., 2014; White et al., 2008,

²⁸ White et al., 2008.

In-service Teachers: Compensation for the perceived disadvantage of non-metropolitan locations dominates approaches to incentives.

“Compensating teachers for the perceived disadvantage of non-metropolitan locations only seeks to further reinforce perceived disadvantage with little focus on improving practice for students.”

Incentives By state and Territory In-Service Teachers

Financial



Available in:

- Western Australia
- Queensland
- New South Wales
- Victoria
- Tasmania
- Northern Territory
- Victoria

Professional Conditions



Available in:

- Queensland
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory
- South Australia
- Western Australia

Professional Development



Available in:

- Queensland
- New South Wales
- Victoria
- Northern Territory
- Victoria

Promotion of the Profession



Available in:

- Western Australia
- Queensland
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory
- Tasmania

Details of incentives for in-service teachers by state and territory

The most common approach to incentives is to provide financial compensation for the perceived limitations and disadvantages of service in non-metropolitan regions. There are limited examples of incentives focussed on the professional conditions in which teachers work. This dominance of financial incentives positions financial inducements, compensation and relocation as the main driver of behaviour. Motivation to work in non-metropolitan communities is situated in narrow human capital terms, informed by external motivators. There is limited focus on internal human capitals related professional motivations.

The following section provides details of incentives offered by category and by state and territory. A more detailed overview can be found in the appendix

Promotion of the Profession



Webpage Promotion



Careers Fairs

Promotion of teaching opportunities in non-metropolitan locations at events such as university careers fairs or travelling pop-up stalls that stop at different events.



Trial Period

Teachers can trial teaching in a non-metropolitan school before accepting a longer term position.



No Incentives Available



Financial Incentives



Isolation payments
Retention benefits
Housing costs
Medical costs

Travel costs
Retention benefits
Experienced teachers

Isolation payments
Retention benefits
Housing costs

Travel costs
Relocation support
Children's schooling



Isolation payments
Retention benefits

Housing costs
Relocation support

Isolation payments
Retention benefits
Housing costs

Travel costs
Relocation support



Isolation payments

Travel costs

Isolation payments
Retention benefits
Housing costs

Travel costs
Relocation support



Isolation payments
Housing costs
Medical costs

Travel costs
Relocation support

Professional Conditions



Fast track to permanency
Transfer priority
Additional leave



Transfer priority
Additional leave



Fast track to permanency
Additional leave



No incentives offered



Professional Development



Study leave



**Additional leave to attend
professional development**

Induction programs
Professional development




VET professional development
**STEM training for out of field
teachers**



No incentives offered





“Incentivising the profession solely through external motivations ignores the character of professional practice: the desire to be able to perform the role one trained and prepared for.”

Calculation of Incentives: The higher the perceived disadvantage the more incentives on offer in all states and territories.

“Incentives based on perceived disadvantage privilege the teacher, rather than the education of the students that reside in the community the teachers serve.”

Calculation of Incentives

Each education jurisdiction calculated incentives based on different factors of perceived important to attracting and retaining teachers. These fall into five categories:



Mandated duration of Service

Teachers are eligible to receive incentives after remaining in a non-metropolitan hard to staff location for a minimum period of time.



Initial Period of Service

Teachers are paid incentives for the initial years of their employment in a non-metropolitan hard to staff school.



Location of School

Locations are ranked in terms of their perceived isolation. Those that are more isolated have higher rates of incentives.



Additional Factors

Additional factors on top of location are considered. For example, a higher proportion of Indigenous population would increase the incentives offered.



Type of Service

Permanent & contract teachers are eligible for different incentives, as are teachers assigned for a specific purpose.

The most common methods of calculation were related to the location of the school, and periods of service – either for the first few years they are in a non-metropolitan location or after completing a mandated period of time in a school.

It is noted that this approach to determining incentives based on perceived disadvantage privileges the teacher, rather than the students that reside in the community the teacher serves.

Calculation of Incentives by State and Territory

Mandated Duration of Service



Used in:

- New South Wales
- Queensland
- South Australia
- Western Australia
- Northern Territory

Initial Period of Service



Used in:

- New South Wales
- Queensland
- South Australia
- Northern Territory
- South Australia

Location of School



Used in:

- All states and Territories with non-metropolitan schools

Additional Factors



Used in:

- New South Wales
- Queensland
- South Australia
- Western Australia
- South Australia

Type of Service



Used in:

- New South Wales
- Queensland
- South Australia
- Western Australia
- South Australia

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Appendix 1. Detailed Overview of Incentives Available to In-service Teachers in each State and Territory

Incentives for In-service Teachers in Queensland

Incentive Type	Description
Financial Incentives	Payments for staying beyond a minimum period.
	Locality allowance – this is determined by how remote a school is.
	Location incentive for schools in Indigenous communities.
	Housing subsidies
	Payments to cover transfer costs & support with relocation.
	Contributions towards the costs of students schooling when teacher's children attend school in provincial and metropolitan areas as well as access to QLD Academy Schools.
	Compensation benefit for travel in and out of the community.
	Flight travel compensation for teachers in remote Indigenous communities.
Professional Conditions	Increased opportunities for permanency (no details on how this occurs).
	Additional leave for travel to provincial centres and additional vacation leave.
	Transfer points accrued at a higher rate than teachers located in metropolitan schools.
Professional Development	Centres for Learning and Wellbeing: four in rural locations allowing access to professional development, resilience training and leadership capacity building.
	Induction programs for schools in eligible locations.
Promotion of the Profession	Webpage with information about incentives, brochures & videos on YouTube.
	Rural and Remote Teacher Experience Program: urban teachers can try rural teaching during a one-week experience program.
	Teach Rural careers fair that travels to different locations promoting rural teaching.

Incentives for In-service Teachers in New south Wales

Incentive Type	Description
Financial Incentives	Retention benefit of up to \$5000 paid annually.
	Isolation from socio-economic goods and services allowance paid for distance from goods and services. Also incorporates the motor vehicle depreciation allowance.
	Broken Hill Allowance for appointment to schools in this location.
	Climatic allowance paid to Western Division schools for extreme summer weather. Also, for some eligible schools in cool climate locations.
	Rental subsidy with payment amount dependant on how remote the school is.
	Relocation subsidy for newly appointed teachers
	Experienced teacher benefit paid to proficient teachers in eligible schools, \$10 000 for up to 5 years.
	Rural Teacher Incentive payment, \$20-\$30 000 a year dependent on how remote the school is.
	Recruitment bonus for principals to offer to prospective teachers for longer term positions in 'hard to staff' positions.
	Transferred officer's compensation provides reimbursement of costs after a specified number of years in their school.
	Medical reimbursement available for some medical costs incurred.
	Vacation travel expenses for school holiday travel costs.
Professional Conditions	Recognition of temporary service with credit transfer points when teachers become permanent which means teachers are eligible for transfers quicker.
	TEPS benefit: 50 days of service increases priority for permanent employment.
	Fast Tract temporary to permanent allows temporary teachers to be nominated to fill permanent positions after 12 months in the position on merit selection, and satisfactory performance.
	Additional personal leave including personal, family, community, and western zone leave.
	Priority transfer based on years of service in various locations.
Professional Development	Additional days leave for the extra travel it takes to get to PD locations.
Promotion of the Profession	Webpage with videos promoting the benefits of rural schools & incentives available.
	Opportunity to take a 10 week trial placement before appointment in rural school.
	FAQ's webpage about rural teaching.

Incentives for In-service Teachers in South Australia

Incentive Type	Description
Financial Incentives	Country incentive zone allowance for a maximum of 5 years.
	Locality allowance in recognition of high costs of living.
	Subsidies for the costs of housing.
	Contributions to relocation and removal costs.
	Country incentive incidentals payment is a one-off payment for permanent & contract positions.
	Medical and dental costs reimbursement due to travel & higher costs.
Professional Conditions	Extra travel days of 16 days per year in Aboriginal & Anangu schools.
	Return to metropolitan area guarantee for permanent employees.
Professional Development	Extra points accrued towards study leave if in Aboriginal and Anangu schools.

Incentives for In-service Teachers in Tasmania

Incentive Type	Description
Financial Incentives	District allowance for remote parts of Tasmania (the islands).
	Fares from Bass Strait Island to Melbourne for leave & medical needs.
Promotion of the Profession	Webpage promoting the profession.

Incentives for In-service Teachers in Victoria

Incentive Type	Description
Financial Incentives	Retention benefit payment each year for three years.
	Remote allowance payment depending on how remote your schools is.
	Support to find housing & access to teacher housing.
	Funding to relocate to rural areas included in recruitment bonus.
	Recruitment bonus for principals to offer in hard in hard to staff schools & positions. To be used for relocation costs, housing and cost of living.
Professional Development	Professional development for VET teachers.
	Out of field teacher training (STEM focused) with relief teacher provision <i>*available in metropolitan areas as well.</i>

Incentives for In-service Teachers in Western Australia

Incentive Type	Description
Financial Incentives	Country teaching allowance incentive paid per year.
	Locality allowance for the Remote Teaching Service.
	Teacher housing financial assistance as well as utilities & wear & tear costs depending on location.
	Relocation costs covered.
	Travel for vacations covered depending on location.
Professional Conditions	Permanency after two years of service if in the Remote Teaching Service or Country Teaching Program schools.
	Additional leave for those in the Remote Teaching Service.
Promotion of the Profession	Webpage with promotional videos & information available.

Incentives for In-service Teachers in Northern Territory

Incentive Type	Description
Financial Incentives	Annual retention payment after 12 months of service.
	Remote incentive allowance because costs are higher.
	Teacher housing with 100% rental concession in department housing.
	Relocation costs covered.
	Fares out of isolated locations to travel to Alice Springs or Darwin.
Professional Conditions	Business days leave to access services not available in remote communities.
	Guaranteed transfer after three years in a remote location back to main centres in the Northern Territory.
Professional Development	Extra points accrued towards study leave.
	4WD training if working in and travelling to remote locations regularly.
Promotion of the Profession	Webpage promoting remote teaching including stories from current teachers.
	Remote teacher guide & links to other websites about living and working in remote Northern Territory.

Appendix 2: Websites used to view Information about Incentives

New South Wales

<https://teach.nsw.edu.au/find-teaching-jobs/choose-rural/benefits-and-incentives>

Western Australia

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/country-practicum-program>

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/benefits-and-support>

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/rural-regional-and-remote>

<https://apps.det.wa.edu.au/aab/>

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/benefits-and-support#teachers>

Victoria

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/rural-and-regional-educational-reform.aspx>

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/targeted-initiative-to-attract-more-teachers.aspx>

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/employcond/Pages/allowancesTS.aspx#link91>

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/infrastructure/tchhspropmgmt.pdf>

Queensland

<https://teach.qld.gov.au/teach-in-queensland-state-schools/pay-benefits-and-incentives/rural-and-remote-benefits>

<https://teach.qld.gov.au/teach-in-queensland-state-schools/pay-benefits-and-incentives/rural-and-remote-incentives-calculator>

<https://teach.qld.gov.au/scholarships-and-grants/beyond-the-range-professional-experience-grant>

<https://teach.qld.gov.au/scholarships-and-grants/rural-and-remote-graduate-teacher-scholarships>

<https://education.qld.gov.au/schools-educators/other-education/rural-and-remote-education/centres-for-learning-and-wellbeing>

<https://education.qld.gov.au/about-us/budgets-funding-grants/grants/state-schools/core-funding/rural-remote-teach-exp>

<https://teach.qld.gov.au/teach-events/career-fairs>

Northern Territory

<https://www.teachintheterritory.nt.gov.au/teaching-territory/teach-remote-areas>

<https://www.teachintheterritory.nt.gov.au/teaching-territory/unique-territory-lifestyle>

South Australia

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/working-teacher/pay-and-allowances/allowances/country-incentives>

Tasmania

https://pli.education.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/111_19_MTQT-Teacher-Intern-Program-Update_Final-24052019-V2.pdf

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/about-us/teach-tasmania/regional-tasmania/>

https://www.tic.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/179317/T13783_and_T13784_order_3_2011_Consolidated.pdf

<https://publicdocumentcentre.education.tas.gov.au/Documents/PEIRS-Brochure.pdf>